
Title: Elavain's Quest, Part I

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Elavain steps carefully onto the tiles floating over the Lava Maze. It hasn't been the first time lately that she has had to tread lightly. Ever since Lord Thorn swore out a Writ of Summons at Paladin Headquarters in Trinsic she had been treading very lightly indeed. Before venturing out to complete the quest, she had returned to Heartwood so that her mother could hide her from the Paladins. Aeluva greeted her daughter and asked if all was well. Recently she had seen her daughter complete the Spellweaving quest and did not expect her to return to Heartwood so soon. Her apprenticeship to Lord Raven must occupy most of her time, she thought. After greeting her mother, Elavain explained the unusual circumstances. She had asked for an early release from her apprenticeship and had undertaken the Candle of Love Quest. Though she had not asked Lord Raven directly she had expected his support. Instead he had instructed his friend Lord Thorn to track her down and stop her at all costs.

At first she treated it like a game. Using her skills at magery to cast Incognito on herself and

slip by Thorn. But it was not long before Thorn sought the help of the Paladin Command in Trinsic. Any Paladin of rank can swear out a Writ of Summons, which obligates all other Paladins to engage in a search for the named individual. A bounty of 50,000 gold was also posted. When Elavain saw the notices tacked up she realized how serious this situation had become. She would never be able to complete the quest when every Paladin in Trinsic was on the road looking for her. So, she returned home to her mother and sought refuge in Heartwood.

After hearing her daughter's story, Aeluva was silent for a long time. Then, touching Elavain gently on the sleeve she told her a secret. Something she had promised never to tell to anyone, even her own daughter. Elavain's eyes welled with tears and she grabbed Aeluva and pulled her into a tight embrace. "Mother." She whispered "How could you not tell me this!"

Elavain had to clear her mind of the whirlwind of thoughts and emotions. One tile at a time... one tile at a time. After many failures she succeeded in lighting the Candle of Love. Her only thought was to return to Lord Raven and show him the Candle so that he could see that she was worthy...

Elavain was too smart to teleport directly to Lord Raven's house. It would be under surveillance. Instead

she disguised herself and worked her way slowly through the city of Minoc. Then past the stable and into the woods. She heard the cry of a nearby Troll, but that was not what worried her. With a 50,000gp bounty on her head, many eyes would be watching for her.

As she made her way around a large guildhouse, the sandstone palace of Lord Raven came into view. She looked around carefully, her elven ears tuned to every whisper of the trees and every crackle of leaves. Nothing.

She moved forward to the front steps, the vendors watched her yet remained oddly silent.

Just as she mounted the last step she detected movement on her left and saw the vendor named Bart lifting his arm. A small tube was in his hand... that is the last she remembered. Lord Raven snatched the notice from the wall of the tavern. Swearing under his breath he rode

towards Kinghts Retreat hoping to confront Lord Thorn. Sure, he had asked Thorn to stop Elavain, but an arrest warrant! That was going too far.

He had expected his friend to use some discretion in the matter. However he also realized that he had not given Thorn much information, and had made the orders very clear. "Stop Elavain at all costs!" He

regretted writing those words now. As he approached Knights Retreat, he saw the glow of the hearth and hoped his friend would be there.

Pug had just set down a large pile of bacon. Grabbing his ale he belched loudly. "Thorn, why dont you eat, old man." Thorn cradled his head in his hands and replied: "I have no hunger or thirst friend so leave me be." Pug grunted and began to gnaw on the bacon. The sound of the front door opening caused Thorn to lift his head from his hands. "Now who could that be at this hour?" Raven rounded the top of the steps. Seeing Thorn he immediately shouted: "What have you done! You must release the Writ!" Thorn stammered, "That is not possible m'lord! Once sworn the offender must see the Jailer and the bounty must be paid!" "Well then we are off to Trinsic to pay the bounty!" growled Raven.

Elavain awoke inside the foul confines of the Trinsic Jail. Looking through the bars she could see her spellbooks and her reagent pouch sitting on the Jailer's desk. She looked closely and saw no sign of the Candle that she had strived so hard to get. Despair set in. So much work and all for nothing, she thought. The hours passed and as the first rays of daylight began to show through the bars she heard a commotion at the front of the jail. A young Paladin was speaking in excited tones to the Jailer. She could hear voices, then a guard came up to her cell and jammed the keys

into the lock. A harsh clang of steel and the door swung open on squeaky hinges. She stepped forward cautiously. The guard grabbed her arm and thrust her forward into the Jailers office.

Lord Raven gasped when he saw Elavain. She looked so pale and tired, and the guard was shoving her around like a training dummy. He fingered some mandrake root and thought of a suitable incantation for the demise of the guard, but then he caught the look in Thorn's eyes. Thorn stepped forward with authority. "I am Lord Thorn, I swore the Writ for this person and I am here to pay the bounty!" "Very well," said the Jailer, "lets see your gold." Lord Raven tossed a check for 50,000gp on the Jailer's desk. The Jailer glanced at the paper and then nodded to the guard who released Elavain and stepped back. Raven looked at Elavain and said: "I have something to tell you." Elavain returned his gaze and said: "If you intend to tell me that you are my father, then I already know." The guard and Jailer exchanged an awkward glance. Thorn coughed and stared at his boots. Raven made no sound, or even moved. It was as if he had been cast into stone. Elavain

continued... "Aeluva told me of how you two... um.... well, she told me that you are my father." Lord Raven straightened himself and squared his shoulders. "Yes Elavain, I am your father. And I must ask your forgiveness for not telling you... and... for how I have been acting lately." Elavain's face lit up in a smile as bright as the sun itself and she ran over to Raven, casting her arms about him. The old mage hesitated for but a moment then wrapped his arms around her as well. Had any been brave enough to look, perhaps they would have seen a tear rolling the leathery skin of the old mages face.

End Part I